



[Lenin: page 100 of his notebook for “Conspectus of Hegel’s book \*The Science of Logic\*”](#)

# The Subject Matter of the Logic

We will come to **Tony Buzan** in the next instalment of this part of our course on Hegel, but let us also consult him briefly here, before we look at [Andy Blunden](#)’s lecture on “**The Subject Matter of the Logic**” (download linked below). Buzan wrote:

*“One of the interesting facts about people using study books is that most, when given a new text, start reading on page one. It is not advisable to start reading a new study text on the first page . . .*

*“What is essential in a reasonable approach to study texts, especially difficult ones, is to get a good idea of what’s in them before plodding on into a learning catastrophe . . . [in*

other words to find out quickly what the text is about]

*“What this means in a study context is that you should scour the book for all the material not included in the regular body of the print. . . Areas of the book to be covered in your overview include:*

<b>results</b>	<b>tables</b>	<b>subheadings</b>
<b>summaries</b>	<b>table of contents</b>	<b>dates</b>
<b>conclusions</b>	<b>marginal notes</b>	<b>italics</b>
<b>indents</b>	<b>illustrations</b>	<b>graphs</b>
<b>glossaries</b>	<b>capitalised words</b>	<b>footnotes</b>
<b>back cover</b>	<b>photographs</b>	<b>statistics</b>
<b>index</b>	<b>bibliography</b>	<b>acknowledgements</b>

Never did we need more clues of this kind than when studying Hegel. In this regard we can return to Lenin. A facsimile of page 100 of Lenin’s notebook for “[Conspectus of Hegel’s book The Science of Logic](#)” is given above. Although Lenin uses only one colour and no illustrations, yet his notes do quite resemble one of Tony Buzan’s “mind maps”, as we shall see.

It was in this work that Lenin wrote *“It is impossible completely to understand Marx’s Capital, and especially its first chapter, without having thoroughly studied and understood the whole of Hegel’s Logic. Consequently, half a century later none of the Marxists understood Marx!!”*

[In the very next note](#), Lenin wrote: *“Hegel actually proved that logical forms and laws are not an empty shell, but the reflection of the objective world. More correctly, he did not prove, but made a brilliant guess.”* This is a good clue and it corresponds to

part of what Andy Blunden has to say, as we will see.

Our wonderful resource, the [Marxists Internet Archive](#), has kindly listed, with hyperlinks, [Lenin's Philosophical Notebooks](#) on a single web page; and this is a good moment to remember that Andy Blunden's terrific, fully browsable "[Hegel by Hypertext](#)" is also part of the same Marxists' archive.

### **Andy's Blunden's lecture on the Subject Matter of the Logic**

This lecture was given in 2007 as part of the on-going Australian [Hegel Summer Schools](#). It is readable (but do please skip what you don't understand). From it we can get certain strong clues about Hegel.

One is that Hegel treats sciences as thoughts thinking themselves. His logic is not a single key that can be applied to every kind of thing. He finds that each science thinks in its own way. It follows that his logic is a much more exhaustive work of moving through the entire field of knowledge, describing what is to be found there as a natural history of "second nature". What he seeks to understand is how thought, (science) can arise **without** "presupposition", otherwise called "*a priori*", given or innate understanding.

Now may be a good time to think again about Marx's "Capital" in this context. Marx's quest (pursued from the 1840s, and finished in the late 1850s, after which "Capital" Volume 1 was composed, and published in 1867) was also for one thing, and quite a similar thing: Marx's quest was for "*the secret of the*

*self-increase of capital”.*

Both men were looking to explain something that came from nothing; Hegel as a philosopher, for science in all cases; Marx for the phenomenon of the new ruler of the world: capital.

Contrary to what some of Marx’s followers (including at times, Lenin) have said to the effect that he had discovered a key to understand the world, Marx’s three actual volumes of “Capital” turn out to be analogous to Hegel’s, in that there is no single key that opens all doors, but actually many keys that have to be found.

As with Hegel, much of what is found by Marx is thoroughly “counter-intuitive” as we would say these days. In other words, what is obvious is not always true, and what is found is not to be corrected to fit preconceptions. “Consistency” is not usual, and has no logical, let alone moral, force.

Specificity matters. History matters. Logic is not independent of its content and its history. Hegel and Marx are at one to this extent. Specificity is never lost, even though the essence of logic is movement, or development, and the developing logic is what Hegel, for want of a better word, calls Spirit.

We are not ready for closure yet. We may never be, with Hegel. But one thing we could derive from what we can see so far, is to say that development is the essence of society, and is not something that is done to society, or that society does when it is not sleeping. Development is not an option. It is never absent.

There is only development, and nothing else. If we are not developing towards heaven, then we are developing towards hell. “Those not busy being born are busy dying,” as one of Bob Dylan’s songs says.

Andy Blunden wrote a whole book on the [Meaning of Hegel’s Logic](#), available free on MIA. Another very helpful work of Andy’s is [Getting to know Hegel](#). The latter is an Appendix to Andy’s great work-in-progress book on “[The Subject](#)”. This man is helping us!

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [The Subject Matter of the Logic, Andy Blunden](#).
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).